

'Valentine' lacks essential heart

MY BLOODY VALENTINE

Loews, Dorval, Monkland

A John Dunning-Andre Link-Stephen Miller production; directed by George Mihalka; screenplay by John Beaird; starring Paul Kelman, Lori Hallier and Neil Affleck.

Roses are red,
Violets are blue.
My Bloody Valentine's
Got nothing new.

That about sums up this Canadian-made gorefest from the same folks who brought you the phenomenally successful *Meatballs*. All that's really notable about *My Bloody Valentine* is that it gives you more than the usual m.p.g.p. — murders per gallon of popcorn.

If you've seen *Prom Night*, a recent Canadian feature from a different studio, your exposure to this latest film's deadly radiation will make you feel as though you're sitting through a re-run.

My Bloody Valentine gets its red herrings from the same fish market as its predecessor — and even stages the murders during yet another teenage party after yet another series of dire warnings from a psychotic killer.

The action takes place in Valentine Bluffs (really!) — which hasn't had a Valentine's Day party in 20 years. It seems that on the day that the town had its last one, five men were trapped down a shaft of a local mine.

When they were finally dug out six weeks later, one of them (Harry played by Peter Cowper) was still alive — and completely insane.

He's committed to a mental hospital for a year, but on his release he murders two negligent mining supervisors, cuts out their hearts and delivers them to the townspeople with a warning never to hold a Valentine's Day dance again.

Twenty years later, local teenagers decide to hold a party anyway. Believe it or not, an old local yokel (escaped from some 1930s movie, no doubt), portends trouble with lines such as: "You may laugh now, but you'll be sorry you didn't listen."

And sure enough, the crazy miner has apparently returned and is up to his old trick — cutting out hearts and packaging them in candy boxes with warnings couched in cute little verses.

The film has a few good scares, but you're bound to luck-out once in a while with roughly 12 murders from which to choose.

The film's main problem, apart from an awkward script, is that it's just not tenable.

It takes an inordinate length of time, for example, to find out whether Harry has escaped from the mental hospital or is dead. And the film's "surprise" ending is simply silly.

The best thing that can be said for *My Bloody Valentine* is that its director, George Mihalka, seems to be learning how to make movies. He's come a long way since his *Pinball Summer* — an amateurish mess full of over-exposed, sloppily shot footage that should have been left on the cutting-room floor.

— Bruce Bailey